



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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QUESTIONS FOR STUDENT MEMBER NOMINEES OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (CGS §§ 10-1; 10-3A, AS AMENDED BY PA 07-114; 10-4)

- Consists of nine voting members who serve staggered four-year terms, the commissioner of higher education who serves as a nonvoting *ex-officio* member, and two nonvoting student members who serve one-year terms.
- Recommends candidate for education commissioner to the governor.
- Has general supervision and control of the educational interests of the state, including preschool, elementary, and secondary education; special education; and vocational education. The educational interests of the state, as defined by law are that (1) each student have an equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences; (2) each school district finance at a reasonable level at least equal to the state's minimum expenditure requirement an educational program designed to achieve this end; (3) in order to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation, each school district provide educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds and may provide such opportunities with students from other

communities; and (4) statutory mandates relating to education within the State Board of Education's jurisdiction are implemented.

- Sets state educational policy in collaboration with the governor and the General Assembly.
- Oversees the state vocational-technical schools.
- Authorizes charter and interdistrict magnet schools.
- Adjudicates complaints against local boards of education that fail to implement the state's educational interests.
- Serves as the final administrative appeal board for issuing and revoking teaching certificates and other educational credentials needed to work in Connecticut public schools.

QUESTIONS FOR NOMINEES

1. What are the major issues you would like the State Board of Education to address during your term? As a nonvoting member, how do you plan to influence the board's deliberations?
2. Do you see it as your responsibility on the board to reflect the concerns and views of your fellow students?
3. Last year the legislature enacted PA 11-232 to strengthen state law regarding school bullying and defining and banning cyberbullying (i.e., bullying through means such as Facebook, blogs, or texting). Do you think the state and school districts are doing enough to combat bullying in schools? Have you noticed any changes since the passage of PA 11-232?
4. Besides bullying, are there other types of discipline problems that regularly interfere with school?
5. State law requires most suspensions to be served in school. What is your opinion of the value of in-school versus out-of-school suspensions?

6. A new law requires, starting with the graduating class of 2020, all high school students to (A) earn 25, rather than 20, credits; (B) pass five end-of-year examinations; and (C) complete a senior demonstration project in order to graduate from high school. Do you think raising high school graduation requirements will help prepare our students for careers and college?
7. Do you think students should be able to give feedback on teacher performance that will be used as part of a teacher's evaluation? In fact, the State Board of Education has adopted an evaluation framework that allows up to 5% of a teachers evaluation to be based on student feedback. At the same time there is legislation pending that ties teacher evaluation to professional certification and pay. If you agree that students should have a roll in teacher evaluation, how do you guard against students giving a teacher a poor evaluation just because they don't like him or her or the teacher was too demanding in the classroom?
8. Do you think there is too much emphasis on test results in Connecticut schools today? Have you seen a lot of "teaching to the test"?
9. Do you think state law should be changed to require that students be at least 5 years old to attend kindergarten?
10. Do you think a ban on the sale of soda and junk food in school is a good idea? Should restrictions for elementary and high schools be different?
11. What additional opportunities should students have to earn high school credit for courses or activities they take outside the classroom, including on-line and college courses? How should the state ensure that the courses maintain high academic standards?
12. What is your perspective on vocational-technical schools, charter schools, and magnet schools?

JM:tjo